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PROPOSED PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1998-1999

First report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions*

* The present document contains part II of chapter II of the first report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999. Chapter I has been issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/52/7). The complete first report will be issued as Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-second Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/52/7/Rev.1).

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PART II. POLITICAL AFFAIRS

Section 2. Political affairs

II.1. As shown in table 2.1 of the proposed programme budget, the Secretary-General's estimate for section 2 for the biennium 1998-1999 amounts to $57,541,000 before recosting, a decrease of $2,138,700 from the 1996-1997 appropriations.

II.2. Also as indicated in table 2.1, extrabudgetary resources for the biennium 1998-1999 are estimated at $5,044,900.

II.3. The Advisory Committee notes from the Secretary-General's proposals on reform as contained in document A/51/950, that it is intended to establish a Department for Disarmament and Arms Regulation as well as a Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services. The Committee understands that the resources proposed for those activities that are currently reflected under section 2 of the proposed programme budget will be transferred out of this section of the budget. Details are provided in document A/52/303.

II.4. As indicated in table 2.3, the total number of established regular budget posts proposed for the biennium 1998-1999 is 260, representing a decrease of 7 as compared with 267 such posts for the biennium 1996-1997. The Advisory Committee notes that the total number of temporary posts funded from the regular budget is 4, compared with 14 during the biennium 1996-1997. The total number of extrabudgetary posts proposed for 1998-1999 remains the same as those for 1996-1997, namely, two. The Committee was informed that of the 17 regular posts (both established and temporary) proposed to be abolished, 13 were vacant as at July 1997.

II.5. As indicated in the footnote to table 2.3, two gratis personnel were contributed for the biennium 1996-1997, and it was anticipated that the same number would be contributed during 1998-1999. However, upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that they were two Junior Professional Officers and, as such, were gratis personnel, type I - one in the Assistant Secretary-General's office at Headquarters and the other in the Europe Division.

II.6. In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, the extrabudgetary staffing tables should indicate much more clearly the status (type) and full cost of gratis personnel. In this connection, the Committee points out that type I gratis personnel are also included in other sections of the budget for 1998-1999. The Committee recalls the information provided in the report of the Secretary-General on the support cost charges for gratis personnel (A/51/688/Add.1, paras. 15-17). In paragraph 10 of its resolution 51/243 of 15 September 1997 on gratis personnel provided by Governments and other entities, the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General to make proposals on the methodology and level of administrative support costs.

II.7. The Advisory Committee recalls that in its first report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997[1] it recommended that, although there had been considerable streamlining, the Secretary-General review the grade structure of the Department of Political Affairs, which was top-heavy. In this connection, the Committee notes that the proposed number of D-2 posts has been reduced from 10 in 1996-1997 to 8 for 1998-1999.

II.8. The Advisory Committee enquired as to possible duplication in the work of the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations. The Committee was informed that it would be impossible to avoid completely some duplication and that the principle of comparative advantage was being applied. The Committee was further informed that regular coordination meetings at all levels took place between the two departments.

II.9. Notwithstanding the above comments, the Advisory Committee, during its meetings with representatives of the Secretary-General, discussed several areas of duplication between the two departments, including activities related to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara and Cyprus. Moreover, the Committee has noted an overlap in the desk officer system that is in effect in both departments. In this connection, the Committee recalls its comments made in its previous report.[2]

II.10. The Advisory Committee intends to revert to this matter. Further observations are provided in the context of its consideration of the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/52/303 (see below).

II.11. As indicated in paragraph 2.10 of the proposed programme budget, proposals under this section make adjustments for the need to strengthen coordination between the United Nations and the regional organizations with which it cooperates most closely in matters of peace and security and for the particularly pressing demands for the Organization to help prevent, control and resolve conflicts in Africa. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes that, although it is not specifically detailed in the budget estimates, it is proposed to establish a liaison office in Addis Ababa with a staffing component of one post at the D-1 level and one Local level post, at an estimated cost of $352,400 before recosting.

II.12. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 2.129 that it is proposed that the three P-5 posts approved for the regional disarmament centres in Kathmandu, Lomé and Lima and two General Service posts at Headquarters be abolished, since the P-5 posts had not been filled since their approval, nor had voluntary contributions for the operations of the centres been made as expected. The Committee was informed that discussions were under way with UNDP for provision of some resources for consultancy purposes for the centre in Lomé and if the efforts were successful, then the question of abolishing the P-5 post for that centre would be reconsidered. In this connection, the Committee recalls its recommendation that the Secretary-General review the financial viability of those centres.[3] The Committee is of the opinion that the proposal of the Secretary-General to abolish the centres should be drawn to the attention of the First Committee and that before the General Assembly takes a decision on the matter, the Secretary-General should provide additional information on the status of voluntary contributions and, as concerns Lomé, the status of discussions with UNDP.

II.13. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 2.110 of the proposed programme budget that the abolition of one P-3 post has been proposed under subprogramme 7, Question of Palestine. The Committee has requested additional information relating to that proposal. It was informed that as at January 1996 one Professional post had been kept vacant as part of the effort to realize the savings required by the General Assembly during the biennium 1996-1997. The functions of the post (mainly organization of meetings of non-governmental organizations) were integrated with those of another post responsible for organizing regional seminars. At the same time, the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People decided to combine some of

its symposia and seminars for which the Division for Palestinian Rights was mandated to provide servicing. Nonetheless, the Committee points out that the Assembly, in its resolution 50/214 of 23 December 1995, requested that the staffing requirements of the Division be kept under review in the light of the developments in the Middle East. Under the circumstances, the Committee does not find a rationale for the abolition of the post.

II.14. As indicated in paragraph 2.14, provisions relating to the servicing of the General Assembly that were previously reflected under section 1, Overall policy-making, direction and coordination, are proposed for redeployment to the present section. The Advisory Committee notes from table 2.6 of the proposed programme budget that an amount of $412,900 before recosting (representing negative resource growth of 44.4 per cent) has been estimated to cover the direct costs of the fifty-third and fifty-fourth sessions of the Assembly. However, as indicated in paragraph 2.15, while most of the Assembly's meetings are held from September to December, meetings are now held with increasing frequency during the rest of the year, and that trend is expected to increase in coming years, thus generating new requirements for the Secretariat.

II.15. As indicated in paragraph 2.42, the estimated requirements of $4,055,900 would provide for the staffing structure of the Office of the Under-Secretary-General. The Advisory Committee notes that a growth in resources of $376,000 represents the combined effect of the application of the standard vacancy rates and the inward redeployment of a P-5 post. The Committee notes from paragraph 2.43, and also from an oral presentation to the Committee, that the additional P-5 post has been proposed for redeployment from subprogrammes 1 and 2 (General Assembly and Security Council) in order to assist with the Department's role as convener of the Executive Committee. Further comments on the redeployment of this post will be given in the context of its consideration of the Secretary-General's report contained in document A/52/303 (see below).

II.16. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraphs 2.16 and 2.19 that the resources required for contractual services in connection with external printing to meet the needs of the General Assembly and the Security Council show negative growth of 80.7 and 80.2 per cent respectively as a result of greater use of in-house capabilities such as text-processing software and desktop publishing. The Committee welcomes that development and encourages greater efforts to further reduce or even eliminate the need for external printing through the astute utilization of advances in technology.

II.17. As noted in table 2.9, estimated resources of $402,300 before recosting would cover the cost of travel of the 25 representatives of the Special Committee on the Situation with regard to the Implementation of the Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. Travel and other activities, as outlined in paragraphs 2.25 and 2.29, are determined by the Special Committee itself, and the resource growth of $177,100 indicated in paragraph 2.29 represents the partial restoration of provisions that had existed in the initial 1996-1997 appropriation but were surrendered owing to the reductions effected in 1996.

II.18. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 2.79 of the proposed programme budget that requirements for general temporary assistance ($86,500) relate to the elimination of the accumulated backlog in the preparation of the Repertoire of the Practice of the Security Council covering the years since 1989 and the Repertory of Practice of United Nations Organs since 1979, for which a minimum of approximately 12 work-months at the P-4 level has been requested. The Committee was informed that these publications suffer from serious delays

owing to a lack of adequate staff resources; for the Repertory in particular, the delays are compounded because of delays from the submitting departments, which also lack adequate staff resources. As indicated in paragraph 2.82, estimated requirements of $36,300 have been requested to cover specialized indexing services for the French edition of the eighth supplement of the Repertoire, which has been prepared, as well as for the ninth supplement when that has been translated. The Committee doubts whether the requested amounts of $86,500 and $36,300 would be adequate to deal with the accumulated backlog. The Committee recommends that the matter be reviewed to consider measures similar to those taken by the Office of Legal Affairs in dealing with the backlog in the publication of the Treaty Series.

II.19. The Advisory Committee upon enquiry was informed that there was a problem with some recurrent publications such as the Repertoire, the Disarmament Yearbook, official records of the Security Council and others. While the English versions may be completed on time, the time-frame for translation into other languages ranges from approximately 11 months for the French version to three years for the Arabic and Chinese versions. The Committee was informed that the level of resources requested would be sufficient only to maintain the status quo; there are no means to reduce the current backlog. The Committee trusts that the Secretariat will immediately introduce the measures necessary to ensure timely translation of documentation into all official languages; the Secretary-General should make proposals in this regard to the General Assembly before December 1997.

II.20. As indicated in paragraph 2.66, since 1992 the United Nations has received 125 requests for electoral assistance from Member States. In recent experience United Nations electoral assistance has been geared more to smaller missions that provide technical assistance to the electoral authorities of the Member State concerned with coordinating support provided by others or to providing a symbolic United Nations presence, compared with the large missions of prior years that organized, conducted or observed the elections. The Advisory Committee requested additional information on the number of such technical assistance requests received and the number of assessment missions dispatched in response to such requests. It was informed that in 1995, out of 22 requests for assistance received, 17 were responded to; in 1996, out of 27 requests received, 14 were replied to positively or were under consideration at the end of the year. Assistance was not provided in cases involving requests received with insufficient lead time (i.e., less than three months before an election) or where the political conditions in the country were not sufficiently conducive to the holding of genuine and periodic elections.

II.21. The Advisory Committee recommends that the narrative portion of the submission be updated in certain areas. For example, the Committee notes that in paragraphs 2.97 and 2.100, bodies that have completed their work have been included in the narrative. Furthermore, as indicated in paragraph 2.92, a P-4 post has been proposed for redeployment to serve as secretary of one of the working groups of the General Assembly. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the working group referred to was the Open-ended Working Group on the Question of Equitable Representation on and Increase in the Membership of the Security Council and Other Matters Related to the Security Council. However, following the transfer of all technical servicing functions from the Department of Political Affairs to the new Department of General Assembly Affairs and Conference Services, the utilization and functions of this post would be subject to the decision of the head of the new Department.

II.22. In the report on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (A/51/873), it was indicated that owing to a reduction in the number of meetings identified as excessive there would be a savings of $188,000 for the Department of Political Affairs. Additional savings would be realized through the use of in-house drafting and editing and a reduction in the size of the Disarmament Yearbook and Disarmament Periodic Review. Similar information regarding the streamlining of publications was also contained in the Secretary-General's report on the programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997 (A/C.5/50/57/Add.1) and reflected in the second report of the Advisory Committee on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1996-1997.[4] The Committee regrets however, that such savings are not clearly identified in the proposed programme budget submission as they should relate to the requests for the biennium 1998-1999.

Report of the Secretary-General on United Nations reform: measures and proposals (A/52/303)

The above report was issued subsequent to the Advisory Committee's consideration of its draft report on the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999.

At the time of the Advisory Committee's consideration of its draft report, a decision still had not been reached on how the Secretary-General's reform proposals would be dealt with in the General Assembly. The Committee will therefore revert to consideration of document A/52/303 in due course.

Section 3. Peacekeeping operations and special missions

II.23. As shown in table 3.2 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, the Secretary-General's estimate for section 3 for 1998-1999 amounts to $89,703,500 before recosting, a decrease of $45,801,800 against the 1996-1997 appropriations. The Advisory Committee understands that the reason for the decrease in resources is mainly due to the fact that resources for ad hoc missions have been reflected only up to 31 March 1998.

II.24. Also indicated in table 3.2, extrabudgetary resources for the biennium 1998-1999 are estimated at $54,193,200. Thus, the estimated resource requirements for the biennium total $153,672,100 as compared to $186,689,100 for 1996-1997.

II.25. In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, the Secretary-General should present proposals on the total requirements from all sources of funding so as to give the Department of Peacekeeping Operations the capacity to implement fully all mandated programmes and activities.

II.26. As indicated in table 3.3, the total number of regular budget posts proposed for the biennium 1998-1999 is 355, representing a decrease of 37 as compared with 392 posts for 1996-1997. The Advisory Committee notes from the same table that the number of temporary posts funded from the regular budget is 4, a decrease of 33 posts as compared with 37 in 1996-1997. Also as shown in table 3.3, the total number of extrabudgetary posts proposed for the biennium 1998-1999 is 224, representing a decrease of 2 as compared with 226 posts for 1996-1997. Of the 37 regular posts proposed to be abolished, the Committee was informed that 6 were vacant as at 1 July 1997.

II.27. In addition, 134 gratis personnel are indicated in footnote a to table 3.3. The Advisory Committee recalls that in its report of 28 February 1997 (A/51/813), it had recommended that gratis personnel be phased out; the Secretary-general has also indicated that a plan would be developed to phase out the use of gratis personnel in the Secretariat at the earliest possible date (see A/51/950). In this connection, the Committee recalls General Assembly resolution 51/243 of 15 September 1997 on gratis personnel. It will therefore be necessary for the Secretary-General to assess the impact of this development on the support account and under the regular budget. However, there was no indication in the budget submission and the Secretariat was unable to provide information regarding the period over which the phasing out would take place and what resource implications it would entail for the Department's funding under either the regular budget or the support account.

II.28. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 3.17 (e) that the Situation Centre contains no regular budget posts. In this connection, the Committee draws attention to its recommendation that the time has come to evaluate the operation of the Situation Centre and its resource requirements, including its cost-effectiveness, and that the results of the evaluation be reflected in the next budget submission of the Secretary-General on the support account for peacekeeping operations (see A/51/906 and Corr.1, para. 18).

II.29. The Advisory Committee requested additional information regarding coordination between the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs, especially regarding operations in the same area.

II.30. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 3.19 of the proposed programme budget that an amount of $93,300 is proposed for consultancy services. As indicated in paragraph 3.19 (a), the Department had developed distinctive information and communication links with the peacekeeping and political missions in the field and would require consultancy services to examine and make recommendations, inter alia, on the most cost-effective ways of integrating current systems and ensuring evolution towards common longer-term standards in communications. While the Committee welcomes such an initiative, it recommends that coordination with other departments, especially with the Department of Management, the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Humanitarian Affairs be ensured to maintain a unified United Nations communications network.

II.31. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 3.19 (b) that part of the request for consultancy services is proposed to be utilized for a consultant to undertake a study, over a period of four months, to draw lessons from disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of armed forces programmes carried out by past and ongoing peacekeeping missions. The Committee points out that there is a Lessons Learned Unit within the Department, staff by a D-1 and a General Service post. The Committee believes that there is a need for the administration to clarify the approach it intends to follow in performing lessons-learned activities. The Secretary-General had submitted related proposals in his report contained in document A/51/890 (annex I, para. 30). In this connection, the Committee draws attention to its comments in its report on the support account for peacekeeping operations (A/51/906 and Corr.1, para. 21). The Committee also recalls General Assembly resolution 51/239 A of 16 July 1997, in which the Secretary-General was requested to submit further proposals on the subject for its consideration. The Committee considered the proposals resubmitted by the Secretary-General in his report contained in document

A/51/965 and submitted its comments to the Assembly, which adopted resolution 51/239 B of 15 September 1997.

II.32. As indicated in paragraph 3.21 of the proposed programme budget, a provision of $52,700 has been requested to cover the cost of translation of documents such as peacekeeping studies, mission operating guidelines and claims from Member States into the official languages of the Organization.

II.33. As indicated in paragraph 3.22 of the proposed programme budget, resources amounting to $1,269,500 have been requested for general operating expenses. An amount of $260,100 would provide for rental of photocopying machines. Included in the estimates are provisions of $52,100 for paper and other reproduction supplies. In view of the availability of desktop publishing facilities, the Advisory Committee believes that the use of photocopiers and related supplies could be reduced. The requirement of a code to use photocopying machines could also be introduced.

II.34. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 3.22 (d) that $197,100 would cover the cost of maintaining office automation equipment; provisions requested under the regular budget relate to maintenance and software costs for 140 personal computers. In addition, the Department has an inventory of 426 personal computers, of which 26 are already obsolete. The Committee notes that the report of the Secretary-General on the support account for peacekeeping operations contained a request for resources for maintenance of 22 personal computers against the support account (A/51/890, annex I, para. 48).

II.35. With regard to the replacement of personal computers, as indicated in paragraph 3.25 (b) of the proposed programme budget, 55 personal computers are proposed to be replaced; furthermore, as indicated in the report of the Secretary-General, provision for replacement of 45 personal computers had been requested (A/51/890, annex I, para. 52).

II.36. As indicated in table 3.2 of the proposed programme budget, extrabudgetary resources amounting to $1,530,700 have been approved as general operating expenses against the support account with a provision for personal computers.

II.37. The Advisory Committee enquired but was not able to ascertain the number of personal computers, of the total of 426, purchased against regular budget funds and the number purchased against the support account. The Committee was also not able to reconcile the number of personal computers with the number of regular budget staff indicated in table 3.3.

II.38. In the report on the review of the efficiency of the administrative and financial functioning of the United Nations (A/51/873), it was indicated that because of the use of time chartering instead of voyage chartering of vessels, savings of over $21 million had been achieved for the Department; an estimated savings of $10 million to $20 million per year is envisaged in this connection. The Department also saved $1.7 million for 1996 through the improved selection and training of police monitors. The Advisory Committee requested further details on this point, including the manner in which the savings were reprogrammed. While the Committee was provided with detailed information on how the savings were achieved, including economies of scale through the time charter of vessels and a reduction in mission subsistence allowance and travel costs through improvements in the selection and training of police monitors, it was not provided with an explanation of how those savings were reprogrammed in the proposed programme budget for 1998-1999.

II.39. The same also indicates that by the end of 1997 savings would be achieved through the use of an established vehicle fleet database, global direct provisioning for vehicle spares and requests for purchase of centralized/ standardized vehicles. Over a five-year period, the use of standardized vehicles is estimated to save $50 million to $70 million; centralized disposals are estimated to save $30 million to $40 million; and global direct provisioning for spares is estimated to save $20 million. While the Advisory Committee was provided with details on how savings were to be achieved in this regard, it did not receive an explanation on how the resources would be reprogrammed in the proposed programme budget for 1998-1999.

II.40. The Advisory Committee notes that three trust funds are mentioned in table 3.4, whereas in paragraph 3.32 (c) it is stated that during the biennium 1998-1999, the activities to be undertaken would include the management of 24 trust funds and the development of a trust fund database to ensure availability of timely management information, including cost plans and allotment requests. The Committee was informed that those 24 trust funds were administered in the field. The Committee welcomes the action by the Department with regard to development of a database for this purpose. The Committee was also informed that there was a trust fund unit in the Accounts Division for similar purposes, as well as one in the Department of Humanitarian Affairs for managing its trust funds. The Committee recommends that there be Secretariat-wide coordination in this regard, and also draws attention to its comments under section 27, Administrative services, on simplification of financial statements, including trust funds and related schedules, which should be made more user-friendly.

II.41. The Advisory Committee recalls that in its previous report,[5] it had welcomed the efforts of the Secretary-General to streamline the administrative structure and activities of the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO), which had resulted in a net reduction of $8,614,500. The Committee notes from paragraph 3.45 of the proposed programme budget that during the current biennium similar initiatives have been undertaken. As indicated in paragraph 3.46, the estimates include proposals for the abolition of 23 posts (8 in the Field Service category and 15 at the Local level). The Committee was informed that for various reasons, including the fact that UNTSO has been used as a "resource base" for supplying staff to other newer and more dynamic missions and the need to meet the mandated vacancy rate of 6.4 per cent, the mission has had a high vacancy rate. The resource growth of $696,000 for posts indicated in table 3.18 reflects the application of the new standard vacancy rates.

II.42. With regard to the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP), the Advisory Committee notes from table 3.21 as well as paragraph 3.55 of the proposed programme budget that a reduction of seven posts (four in the Field Service category and three at the Local level) has been proposed. Upon enquiry, the Committee was informed that the mission had a high vacancy rate, over and above the 6.4 per cent requirement. With regard to the request for the establishment of a Political Affairs Officer post at the P-4 level for the biennium 1998-1999, the Committee was informed that following a further review of the administrative arrangements and the staffing situation in UNMOGIP, it had been concluded that the establishment of that post was no longer necessary and that the Secretary-General had withdrawn his proposal.

II.43. The Advisory Committee notes in table 3.27 that an amount of $7,908,100 has been requested for financing of the United Nations Verification Mission in Guatemala. The Committee notes from paragraphs 3.3 and 3.78 of the proposed programme budget that the estimated requirements would cover the period from

1 January to 31 March 1998 only. In this connection the Committee points out that in its response to the Secretary-General's statement of programme budget implications (A/C.5/51/47) in which he conveyed the same information, the Committee stated that the provisions of General Assembly resolution 41/213 of 19 December 1986 continued to apply, including those dealing with the treatment of additional expenditures related to peace and security. Bearing in mind that the Mission would be likely to continue until the end of 2000, the Committee indicated that it expected the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999 to include resources for the financing of the Mission for the biennium. The Committee regrets that the Secretary-General has not followed the recommended procedure in this case.

II.44. The Advisory Committee notes the information pertaining to ad hoc missions in paragraphs 3.4 and 3.88. As indicated, resources for those activities in the amount of $23,882,900 were granted by the General Assembly for the biennium 1996-1997. The Committee notes the Secretary-General's statement in paragraph 3.88 that the activities would either have been completed in that biennium or would be of an extraordinary nature and, as such, their extension could not be foreseen at the present time. Therefore, no provision had been made for those activities in the 1998-1999 proposals.

II.45. The Advisory Committee requested a breakdown of the amount of $23,882,900 and was provided with the following information:

Ad hoc missions	1996-1997 appropriations (thousands of United States dollars)
Programme budget implication statements submitted prior to the adoption of resolutions or revised estimates arising from decisions of the Security Council:	
Central American peace process	629.5
United Nations Special Mission to Afghanistan	5 665.2
International Commission of Inquiry in Rwanda	1 186.1
United Nations International Civilian Mission in Haiti	9 770.8
Office of the Secretary-General in Burundi	1 841.5
Political presence in El Salvador	2 154.1
Subtotal	21 247.2
Authorized by the Secretary-General under the authority granted to him by the General Assembly in resolutions on unforeseen and extraordinary expenditures and reported in the performance report:	
Secretary-General's Special Representative in Cambodia	567.6
United Nations Political Office for Somalia	946.1
Special Envoy for Tajikistan	57.5
Special Envoy for Sierra Leone	369.2
Special Envoy for Georgia	134.8

Ad hoc missions	1996-1997 appropriations (thousands of United States dollars)
Technical mission to Zaire	90.3
Personal Representative of the Secretary-General for the controversy between Guyana and Venezuela	29.2
Human rights fact-finding mission to Nigeria	163.1
Special Envoy of the Secretary-General for Ghana, Liberia and Nigeria	16.5
Goodwill mission to the Bakassi Peninsula	46.6
Special Envoy for the Great Lakes region of Central Africa	183.8
Mission to Sudan	31.0
Subtotal	2 635.7
Total	23 882.9

II.46. The Advisory Committee understands that additional missions of this nature envisaged for the near future are likely to cost a further $21 million, financing for which would be handled in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/213.

Section 4. Peaceful uses of outer space

II.47. As shown in table 4.1 of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1998-1999, the Secretary-General's estimate for section 4 amounts to $4,380,400 before recosting, an increase of $204,000 against the 1996-1997 appropriations.

II.48. As also shown in table 4.1, extrabudgetary resources for the biennium are estimated at $460,000. Thus, the estimated resources and requirements for the biennium total $4,888,900.

II.49. As indicated in paragraph 4.10, the increase results mainly from the proposal for an increase of $45,700 for general temporary assistance for the meetings of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space and its subcommittees and for staffing requirements for preparation for the special session of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (UNISPACE III). As indicated in paragraph 4.15, the estimated requirements of $22,700 would provide for the replacement of office automation equipment, while the resource growth of $13,200 is due to the fact this amount was previously included under section 26G, Administration, Vienna, and has now been proposed for redeployment to section 4.

II.50. As indicated in table 4.2, post requirements for 1998-1999 total 18, a decrease of one from 1996-1997. The 18 posts comprise 13 established posts in the Professional category and above and 5 at the General Service level; no posts are funded from extrabudgetary resources.

II.51. The Advisory Committee notes the programme of work described in paragraphs 4.6 and 4.7. The Committee requested and obtained details of programme indicators and outputs for the bienniums 1994-1995 and 1996-1997, as well as the proposed outputs for the biennium 1998-1999. From the information provided to it, the Committee believes that more has been programmed and more reports projected than can reasonably be implemented with the resources available.

II.52. While it was not possible to identify all the expenditures expected to be incurred in the preparation of UNISPACE III, the Advisory Committee was informed that the Committee recognized and agreed that all efforts should be made to keep the cost of UNISPACE III within existing resources by curtailing the documentation for and the duration of the sessions of the Committee and its subsidiary bodies during the year of the Conference.

Notes

[1] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Supplement No. 7, and corrigendum (A/50/7 and Corr.1), para. II.4.

[2] Ibid., para. II.15.

[3] Ibid., para. II.13, and A/50/7/Add.12.

[4] Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-first Session, Supplement No. 7 (A/51/7 and addenda), document A/51/7/Add.1, annex 2.

[5] Ibid., Supplement No. 7 and corrigendum (A/50/7 and Corr.1), para. II.31.